

HONORING MAYOR JOHN HAMM III

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedicated community service of Madison, Illinois Mayor John Hamm III as he is recognized for his lifetime of community service by the Southwestern Illinois Chamber of Commerce of Madison County.

As the Executive Director of the Madison County Housing Authority, John has taken the Authority to a new level of activity, constructing hundreds of new residential units and communities in southwestern Madison County. He has overseen the redevelopment of numerous homes and properties and created new housing opportunities for the people of our area. He has helped break ground and redevelop new housing facilities for seniors and low to moderate income families, giving many families a place to call home.

Mayor Hamm has been a consistent, active participant in community service for Southwestern Illinois serving as a municipal representative on the Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and East West Gateway Council of Governments.

Both he and his wife, Carol, have been longstanding community supporters of Madison's schools and are active with sports groups, booster clubs and many service organizations within the community.

In his longstanding roles, first as a City Council Member in 1987 and then as Mayor of the City of Madison beginning in 1997, Mayor Hamm has been a champion for his local community. He has undertaken aggressive steps to rid the community of over 100 derelict properties and has worked tirelessly to bring in new businesses, such as Abengoa Bio Energy, Mattingly Lumber and Gateway International Raceway. He has been successful in securing both state and federal grants and funding for a new fire station, parks and walking trails and was instrumental in securing the Chain of Rocks Bridge as a tourist destination.

As a Commissioner of the Tri City Regional Port District since 1997, Mayor Hamm has been an active leader in developing the Port District, working with my office to help in the transfer of the former U.S. Army Charles Melvin Price Support Center to the Port in 2000. During the last several years, over \$325 million in both public and private investment has been made at the Port with an annual economic impact of over \$200 million to the regional economy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Mayor John Hamm in recognition of his years of service as a community leader and to wish him and his family the very best in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO DOLORES REID BARKER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Ms. Dolores Reid

Barker, a charismatic Brooklynite who carries the energy to inspire and motivate others.

Ms. Dolores Reid Barker is a native of Colon, Panama but was raised in the Costa Rican province of La Lola by her maternal grandparents. Ms. Barker received her primary and secondary education in Costa Rica before migrating to the United States to pursue her quest and rich interest in attaining advanced degrees. With dedicated and focused attention, Ms. Barker obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Brooklyn College, a Masters Degree in Special Education from Long Island University, and a second Masters in Educational Administration and Supervision.

Through her academic achievements, Ms. Barker developed a relentless focus on the student-teacher relationship as a prerequisite for sustained student success. It was this emphasis that drove Ms. Barker to assume the first of several positions in the academic environment as a bilingual teacher, eventually becoming staff developer/resource specialist and assistant principal. It is of most importance to Ms. Barker that she clearly communicates her vision of high achievement and teacher accountability in order to build a positive rapport with the parents of children. Ms. Barker currently holds the position of principal of one of New York City's elementary schools, PS 95 Queens, where she raised the schools' evaluation from mediocrity to high achievement.

Within her community Ms. Barker is very active with her Seventh Day Adventist church and several organizations. The organizations Ms. Barker works with include the Concerned Women of Brooklyn Inc., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Phi Delta Kappa, The Interfaith Medical Auxiliary and Assistant Coordinator of the New York State Geography Bee.

She has also been the recipient of many awards for her ardent advocacy for teaching, learning, and leadership. The latest two were the Certificate of Excellence which was presented to her by the Community District Education Council, and Educator of the Week which was featured on Univision, Channel 41 New York.

A piece of inspiration that motivates Ms. Barker is found in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Dolores Reid Barker for her contribution to the education of Brooklyn students and the community.

COMMEMORATING THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 50th Anniversary this month of the National Reconnaissance Office. The National Reconnaissance Office was secretly created in 1961 in response to the Soviet launch of Sputnik with the purpose of overseeing "all satellite and overflight reconnaissance projects whether overt or covert." This information was Declassified to the public in 1992. Today the NRO is in charge of designing, building, launching, and maintaining

the United States of America's intelligence satellites. When the United States needs eyes and ears in critical places where no human can reach—be it over the most rugged terrain or the most hostile territory—we turn to the National Reconnaissance Office.

We are proud to applaud the National Reconnaissance Office for recently completing one of the most aggressive launch campaigns since its inception by launching six complex satellite systems in only seven months. With fewer people and less infrastructure than in years past, this great accomplishment is a testament to the diligent National Reconnaissance Office program teams and the essential collaborative launch efforts with the United States Air Force and the talented workforce they draw from across the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community. Whether creating the latest innovations in satellite technology, contracting with the most cost-efficient industrial supplier, conducting rigorous launch schedules, or providing the highest-quality products to our customers, these successful launches prove the National Reconnaissance Office's never-ending commitment to protect our Nation and its citizens.

As one of the 16 Intelligence Community agencies, the National Reconnaissance Office is a hybrid organization consisting of some 3,000 personnel that is jointly staffed by members of the Armed Services, the Central Intelligence Agency and Department of Defense civilians. Headquartered in Chantilly, Virginia, the National Reconnaissance Office launches from Cape Canaveral, FL and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, while maintaining ground station operations in Virginia, Colorado, New Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Australia. This unique composition and placement of the National Reconnaissance Office workforce allows for launching and operating the most technically-capable systems to continued operations of legacy satellites in order for the United States to remain the premier space reconnaissance organization in the world.

Together with other Defense Department satellites, National Reconnaissance Office systems play a crucial role in providing: global communications, precision navigation, early warning of missile launches and potential military aggression, signals intelligence, and near real-time imagery to United States forces in support of the war on terrorism and other contingency operations. Additionally, National Reconnaissance Office satellites have played an ever increasing role in supporting civil customers, assess crop production, map habitats of endangered species, track oil spills, and study wetlands.

Through continued vigilance from above, the National Reconnaissance Office provides America's policymakers, intelligence analysts, warfighters and homeland security specialists the critical information they need to keep America safe, secure, and free. For these many achievements, I join my colleagues in congratulating the men and women who support the National Reconnaissance Office on 50 years of outstanding service to our nation and may they continue on this path to reach even greater milestones in space reconnaissance for years to come.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTION DAY

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of Constitution Day, happening this Saturday, September 17, 2011, celebrating the 224th anniversary of our Founding Fathers' signing of the Constitution. Constitution Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the past success of our founders in the form of the Constitution, the two centuries of progress since, and the future promise of the United States under the guidance of the document given to us in 1787.

Constitution Day reminds us to review the whole document and what it means to our country, and shows that support for the Constitution requires more than chanting slogans at a political rally. Calling yourself a "strict constitutionalist" means nothing if you don't bother to read the entire Constitution and fight for everything it includes, not just the portions that fit neatly with your personal political philosophy.

As an Iowan, and a student of the Constitution for more than 30 years, I take pride in repeating our state's motto: "Our Liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain." Constitution Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the document that prizes our personal liberties and preserves our rights in a system of laws that recognize the individual spirit of every American, and has made our Nation a shining beacon in the world. The development of the Constitution has recognized the rights of all men and women, and created a system of equality that has helped our Nation move past prejudice and discrimination in some of our darkest hours.

Constitution Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the system of justice for all by creating an impartial judiciary and a system of law that recognizes the rights of every citizen to file a grievance against their government or fellow man. It lets us reflect on the goals of a responsive executive, a representative legislature, and a responsible judiciary working on behalf of all citizens to preserve their rights, respect their liberties, and allow for progress. It reminds us to all work harder to support the progress of the United States.

I ask all my colleagues and constituents to join me in recognizing Constitution Day and reflecting on the lasting work of the Founding Fathers.

RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF CHARLES AND ELIZABETH SESSIONS OF PACE, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize Charles and Elizabeth Sessions on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Charles and Elizabeth Sessions were married on September 15, 1961 by Reverend Bo

Lowery at Pace Assembly of God. Charles and Elizabeth are deeply rooted in Northwest Florida and are lifetime residents of Pace, Florida. As active members in the local community, they were entrepreneurs and owned several businesses in the area. Charles won the first Pace Pioneer Award from the Pace Chamber of Commerce and served on the first planning board for Santa Rosa County, all with Elizabeth by his side.

Charles and Elizabeth are parents to three children, Greg and twins Kim and Ken; and have two grandchildren, Chloe and Brandon. Now retired, Charles and Elizabeth enjoy spending their time with their family, traveling, and their favorite pastime—fishing on Lake Kissimmee or on the river in Camden, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Sessions on their 50th wedding anniversary. They are truly an outstanding family from the First District of Florida. My wife Vicki and I wish their entire family all the best.

A TRIBUTE TO DECORAH HIGH SCHOOL

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the excellence in education in Iowa, and to specifically congratulate Decorah High School in Decorah, Iowa. The United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced today that Decorah High School has made the list of the Nation's 2011 Blue Ribbon Schools.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement. In the words of Secretary Duncan, "National Blue Ribbon Schools are committed to accelerating student achievement and preparing students for success in college and careers. Their success is an example for others to follow."

Decorah High School is among the state's highest performing schools. Decorah High School students scored in the top ten percent in Iowa with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds improving their performance on state assessments or nationally normed tests. Additionally, the students at Decorah High School averaged a full three points higher on their ACT scores than the national average.

Decorah High School's principal Kim Sheppard and one additional teacher will be invited to Washington, DC for the awards ceremony, to take place on November 14th and 15th. At this ceremony, Decorah High School will receive a Blue Ribbon Schools plaque and a flag to signify its elite educational status.

I consider it a great honor to represent Decorah High School Principal Kim Sheppard, the teachers, students, school board members and administrators of the Decorah Community School District in the United States Congress. I wish Decorah High School continued academic excellence as they provide a positive impact on future leaders of our state and country.

A TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT DAKOTA MEYER

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Dakota Meyer, U.S. Marine Corps, who has virtuously served the United States and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Today, Sgt. Meyer will receive the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest medal for bravery, for his courageous actions while serving as a member of the Marine Embedded Training Team 2-8, Regional Corps Advisory Command in Kunar Province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

On Sept. 8, 2009, Meyer's actions saved the lives of 13 U.S. troops and 23 Afghan soldiers.

Taliban insurgents were dug into the high ground and hidden inside a village, pouring down deadly fire at Afghan forces and their American advisers. Armed militants swarmed the low ground to try to finish off the troops.

Meyer's team was pinned down near the village. Defying orders to stay put, Meyer set himself in the turret of a Humvee and rode straight into the firefight, taking fire from all directions. He went in not once, but five times, trying to rescue his comrades.

During about six hours of chaotic fighting, he killed eight Taliban militants and provided cover for Afghan and U.S. servicemen to escape the ambush.

We owe our freedom to exceptional soldiers, like Sgt. Meyer, whose bravery and heroism, and the bravery of those who he fought alongside of, will forever be remembered and appreciated.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring Sergeant Dakota Meyer for his steadfast commitment to the U.S. Marine Corps, his fellow soldiers, his nation and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MR. RALPH D. REID

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today in recognition of the achievements of Mr. Ralph D. Reid, Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for Sprint Nextel. In Ralph's role, he has responsibility for Community Affairs, Employee Engagement and Volunteerism, CSR strategy and operations, and Corporate Diversity and Inclusion. He also directs Sprint's philanthropic activities as President of the Sprint Foundation and works diligently for the residents of the Fifth District of Missouri, which I am honored to represent. This week, Mr. Reid is to be inducted into the Missouri Walk of Fame during a reception as part of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference, an event held to honor the achievements of African-Americans who have made significant contributions to Missouri and the nation.

Ralph graduated from Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama with a Bachelor of